

nothing to designate to rural poor districts.

I found out today that the 100 urban poor districts can even go back for more money. They are not prohibited from getting two bites at the apple.

Let us say they do not. So we fund 200 or 300 school construction projects across America. That leaves 15,300 school districts with no help. That is not fair.

Now we have a proposal for what I call temporary teachers. Several years ago, we had a proposal for temporary cops. We funded 100,000 cops, and although I never really read whether we ever had 100,000 cops and there was a lot of discussion whether we ever met that goal, then when they hired them, we pulled the money back and stuck them with the bill.

That is the way this proposal is. It is not ongoing funding for teachers. It is temporary funding for teachers, and when they hire them, in a couple short years the money is pulled back and they have to pay the bill.

Is this fair, that the Federal Government entices spending at the local level and then pulls the money back? Who will get the money? Will it be another complicated, convoluted grant program? You bet it will. It will take consultants. They will make lots of money; grantsmen, they will make lots of money, but we will only have temporary teachers and we will only have construction in a few urban districts.

If the Federal Government wants to help basic education, we should send money in a fair and evenhanded way that treats urban, suburban and rural on an equal basis, because there is poor all the way up and down the ladder in size.

How do we do that? It is pretty simple. Forty years ago, this Congress, some Congress, passed special education and they said that all of the excess costs for this program, 40 percent of it will be paid for by the Federal Government. When we took over Congress in 1994, Congress was providing 6 percent instead of 40 percent.

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That is a huge shortfall. Now with this year's proposed budget, where we increased it half a billion this year and half a billion last year, we will be up to 12 percent. But that is not 40 percent. If we fully funded special education, the Los Angeles school district would get \$60 million of additional money, the St. Louis school district would get \$25 million of additional money, the York school district, a small rural district in Pennsylvania, would get \$1 million.

But we are \$10 billion short. Instead of paying the bill we promised, instead of funding the program that we started, we want to do new ones, because it is an election year. We want to send some money in some new convoluted way that will only reach a few of our school districts. We can more adequately fund vocational education, where we only spend \$1 billion and we

are passing laws to allow more immigrants to take the technology jobs which come from vocational education. Or we could get some Democrat support for Dollars to the Classroom, that only does away with state and Federal bureaucrats and puts the money in the schools, \$800 million, no new taxes. We could expand loan forgiveness programs that help put teachers where they are most needed.

We do not need new programs. We need to fund the ones that work, that do not cause more Federal bureaucrats, that you do not need grantsmen to apply for, that you do not need some complicated, convoluted process where the money can be funneled into the President's friends.

There are 15,600 school districts across America. They need a fair and evenhanded treatment. The President's proposal will reward his urban political friends and leave rural America with no school construction, with no new teachers, with no help, and not even a promise. That is not fair.

Tonight, I ask us to support funding education in an evenhanded, fair way, that funds education all across America, not just to the President's friends.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HINCHEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time previously allotted to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS REGARDING AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION MUST BE DEALT WITH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, before the 105th Congress adjourns, we must be certain we conclude all of the unfinished business before this Congress, especially in the area of agriculture and in education.

Looking at agriculture, it is a travesty that the appropriations process has zeroed out the \$60 million for funds for rural America which provides important capital for rural economic development. This funding should be reinstated. It is important to recognize that the long-term economic health of rural America depends on a broad and diverse economic base which requires investment in agriculture, rural busi-

nesses, infrastructure, housing stock and community facilities.

The availability of credit is a crucial factor in the success or failure of all small farmers, especially family farmers; both and large and small, I must say, also suffer from the failure of having availability of credit.

In the 1996 farm bill, those persons who, for whatever reason, had to renegotiate their credit, whether one time or two times, were denied the opportunity to get another direct loan or another guaranteed loan. That was regardless of whether it was from disaster or whether it was from having to refinance a loan because they had an overpriced or poor crop, and also if it was because they had civil rights actions, they are being denied, even after the government discriminated against them and found they did. The 1996 farm bill says that regardless of whatever the cause, that farmer cannot get a farm loan.

Now, the USDA farm program was to be the lender of last resort, and producers who have depended on that commitment from the United States Department of Agriculture now find they can neither have a guaranteed loan nor a direct loan.

There is still an opportunity, I understand, before we adjourn to adopt the Senate language which will allow that debt forgiveness and to exclude the opportunity for consolidation or rescheduling or reamortization or referrals of the loan as being bars or barriers from them getting a second loan. We hope the negotiators will take that opportunity.

In addition in the 105th Congress also the appropriators have language in there that will allow for the statute of limitations not to be a barrier to the black farmers who have had complaints against the United States Department of Agriculture, even after the department has acknowledged that they indeed did discriminate.

Now, turning to education, I am from a rural area, and I would want to tell the last speaker that I find that the President's bill calling for 100,000 teachers and reducing the size of classrooms would be beneficial to North Carolina and to my district where I come from. We come from a district that is looking for the opportunity of expanding and recruiting more teachers, and it would certainly be beneficial to reduce the class size, because even in North Carolina, we have found when you reduce the class size, students do better. They achieve better. There indeed is equal opportunity of showing that teachers teach better when they have smaller classes.

As far as the construction loans, my state recently passed bond construction for new schools so the monies that would come from the Federal Government would be a supplement. It would certainly go a long ways toward enhancing the opportunity to make sure we remove the dilapidated buildings and schools.

Again, studies have shown that students, I would say rural students, minority students and disadvantaged students, certainly learn better when they have more teachers, more time, and they certainly learn better as other students learn well when they have a good environment.

Mr. Speaker, the education bill being proposed by the President is not only good for urban areas and suburban areas, but also very good for rural areas. Rural North Carolina and the children in North Carolina would benefit from that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time previously allotted to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

CHINESE HOUSE CHURCH APPEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I want to put domestic concerns and partisan concerns aside and speak for five minutes on behalf of the fundamental human right of religious liberty in the House Churches in China.

Recently a number of House Church leaders in China wrote a very respectful appeal to the government of the People's Republic of China. The appeal says nothing against the Chinese Government, but reflects the utmost respect. These House Church leaders respectfully request that their government release those Christians imprisoned in labor reform camps and to stop attacks on the church. In addition, the authors request that the PRC begin a dialogue with the House Church leaders in order to deepen mutual understanding and to reduce confrontation between the two parties.

Mr. Speaker, the House Church leaders who drafted this document and who sent it to Beijing have taken a very bold and possibly dangerous step in hoping for recognition from their government. I encourage the Chinese Government to take steps to increase religious liberty for the Chinese people, to use caution in these matters, and to deal justly with issues of religious freedom. It is vital that Americans support these courageous House Church leaders and members as they appeal to the Chi-

nese Government for protection of their religious freedom.

I would like to read the House Church appeal which has seven points to it for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It is entitled "a united appeal by the various branches of the Chinese House Church."

One: We call on the government to admit to God's great power and to seriously study today's new trends in the development of Christianity. The government should realize if it were not for the work of God, why would so many churches and Christians be raised up in China? Therefore, the judicial system in the People's Congress and the United Front System should readjust their policies and regulations on religion lest they violate God's will to their own detriment.

Two: We call on the legal authorities to release unconditionally all House Church Christians presently serving in Labor Reform Camps. These include Presbyterians who believe that if one is saved once he or she is saved always; Charismatic Church; Local Church, incorrectly called Shouters Sect; the Way of Life Church, also called the Full Scope Church; the Pentecostal Church; Lutherans who do not attend the Three-Self Churches; and the Baptist Church. They should be released from prison if they are orthodox Christians, as recognized by Christian churches internationally, and have been imprisoned for the sake of the gospel.

Three: There are approximately 10 million believers in the Three-Self Church but 80 million believers in the House Church. The House Church represents the mainstream Christianity in China. Therefore, the government should face reality as it is. If Taiwan with its population of 22 million cannot represent China, but the mainland can with its population of 1.2 billion, likewise the Three-Self Church cannot represent the Chinese Christian Church. The Three-Self Church is only a branch. Moreover, in many spiritual matters there is serious deviation in the Three-Self Church. The government should clearly understand this.

Four: We call on the central leadership of the Chinese Communist Party to begin a dialogue with representatives of the House Church in order to achieve better mutual understanding, to seek reconciliation, to reduce confrontation, and to engage in positive interaction.

Five: We call on the government to spell out the definition of a "cult." The definition should be according to internationally recognized standards and not according to whether or not people join the Three-Self.

Six: We call on the legal authorities to end their attack on the Chinese House Church. History has proven that attacks on Christians who fervently preach the Gospel only bring harm to China and its government. Therefore, the legal system should end its practice of arresting and imprisoning House Church preachers and believers, confining them in labor camps, or imposing fines as a punishment.

Seven: The Chinese House Church is the channel through which God's blessing comes to China. The persecution of God's children has blocked this channel of blessing. Support of the House Church will certainly bring God's blessing.

We hope the government will have a positive response though this united appeal by the House Church.

The Holy Spirit has awakened our hearts. May God bless China. Signed Henan Province. August 22, 1998.

This letter was signed by seven key House Church leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to add that with the definition of cults which

some of the authorities in China appear to have adopted, most of the churches in America would be classified as cults, because under that policy, they could not talk about such things as the end of the world, the second coming of Christ, abortion or spiritual warfare.

I would appeal to the government authorities in China to deal with believers prudently and cautiously, to treat them with dignity and respect. I would remind them it is those countries that recognize the importance of religious liberty and treat it as a fundamental human right which are the most stable societies in the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time previously allotted to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

THE NEED FOR FURTHER EDUCATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk a little bit about school construction, since many of my colleagues are doing that tonight, and I would like to say that I think I have the most experience in this House with respect to school construction.

How many of my colleagues can say that they have constructed six classrooms for the Solvang Elementary School District and redid the bathrooms for the little girls and little boys in that school? Or how many of my colleagues can say they found the money to build a \$64 million state-of-the-art tech high school in Antioch, California. Or how many of you can say that you have issued COPs or gone before Standard & Poors or Moody's to get ratings for any of these school districts? Well, I can say that. I can actually say that I have helped build probably over 30 schools in the State of California. Therefore, I think I understand pretty well what happens with the financing equation of school construction.

Let me tell you that the relationship in the State of California, my state, is that of local and state for school construction. In fact, what used to happen was initially, in the beginning, local